

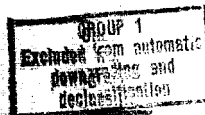
**SECRET**NPIC/TSG/RED-198-70  
2 September 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Technical Services Group, NPIC

SUBJECT : Magnetic Card Selectric Typewriter for RED

1. RED has reviewed PPBS' position on the IBM Magnetic Card Selectric typewriters. While we can understand and sympathize with their reason and their concern in undertaking the study, we cannot totally agree with either the methodology used in, or the conclusions derived from, their analysis. Cost effectiveness was the sole criteria. Cost effectiveness is an elusive term and a much over-worked concept. DOD--where the concept was born--is currently having serious second thoughts about its validity as a criteria for decisions.

2. Let's talk, rather, about increased efficiency in getting the job done. The magnetic card units have increased our efficiency. We have used them extensively, and they have proven this to our satisfaction. Our work is neater, it has fewer errors, and it is becoming more timely. The Division is cost conscious; we tried to get by with a single unit. This didn't work well, primarily because the Division is housed on three separate floors with the bulk of our personnel located on the fourth and fifth floors--at opposite ends of the Building. This led to priority problems, personality conflicts, and to a loss of considerable secretarial time while going from floor to floor and while waiting for a machine. Furthermore, the equipment is somewhat complex, and effective utilization comes only from repeated practice with the machine. A high level of efficiency cannot be obtained with five girls sharing one machine. So, we tried working with two machines. While not ideal, this did work quite well. This is the current situation, and we are loathe to jeopardize a working system. With this contingency in mind, we included money for the purchase of two units in our FY-71 equipment budget along with extensive statements of justification. This funding survived the numerous budgetary reviews. We are not raising a new question or asking for additional funds.

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3. PPBS, by their own criteria, admits that RED can readily justify one machine and almost justify a second unit. This was on "cost effectiveness" alone--based solely on the volume of copies per month. If this is true, it would appear that placing any weight at all upon the other factors involved would readily justify two card units for RED alone. These additional factors are:

- a. Improved neatness of documentation going to the highest levels of the Agency.
- b. Less errors, because the machine does not create new errors while correcting old.
- c. Faster response time, particularly on Project Approval Requests, Staff Studies, and budgetary documentation and tables.
- d. Improved secretarial performance. Secretaries, who are in short supply, type faster and have more time to do other essential tasks such as filing, taking dictation, etc.
- e. The magnetic card provides an effective original file and can be readily used to create new documents or to modify existing documentation. It reduces the requirement for Xerox copies and provides a better copy than Xerox.

4. PPBS has suggested that RED share a unit with ESD. We have reviewed this option, and while it appears reasonable on the surface, we strongly recommend against this approach for the following reasons:

- a. ESD requires a tape machine, while our operations require the use of a card machine. We have attempted to resolve this issue between ESD and ourselves. We cannot--the facts dictate two different types of equipment.
- b. We had conflicts and priority problems when we attempted to share a single machine among branches--imagine the problem between Divisions. ESD's use would be for long documents which would tie up the machine for several days at a time, while our operations require constant usage. Who allocates priorities? Once

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people are used to rapid turn-around time in changing words and getting back a smooth, will they understand if the machine is being used by someone else for a day or two? This is not comparable to a Xerox machine that has a use factor of maybe 20-25% of the working day. This is a secretary's standard working tool that she cannot stand in line for. It would be comparable to asking several people to share one telephone when some of them use it for hours or days at a time.

c. Use across Divisions would result in no one being familiar enough with the equipment to become truly proficient. There are many operations required in using it for formatting and adjusting which must become second nature to the secretary if she is to use it rapidly when the occasion demands. Such items are double spacing at the end of a line; putting in a code-required hyphen in words requiring a hyphen at all times, not just divided words at the end of a line; since the machine does not have a stop at the end of a margin like standard IBM's, the girl must be used to listening for the bell and not just waiting until it hits the limit stop to tell her she is at the end of the margin.

5. All things considered, RED strongly feels that the use of these two pieces of equipment has provided us with a demonstratable increase in efficiency, and that it would prove to be false economy to attempt to return to a single unit or to share a machine with another Division. The cost of [ ] per year rental, while certainly significant, does not seem excessive in view of the manifold benefits to be received.

[ ]  
Chief,

Research & Engineering Division, TSG

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